

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4394
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
COMSIXTHFLT
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
NAF SIGONELLA IT
CTR SIX ZERO
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS OSLO 4158

FOR COMSIXTHAPUJ USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES, NAF SIGONELLA AND CTF XIX ZERO:
PLEASE PASS TO KENNETH KOLB WITH NORWEGIAN NATO GROUP

USIA WASHDC FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, NO
SUBJ: LABOR PARTY LEADING AS VOTE COUNT NEARS CONCLUSION

1. WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS
YET TO BE COUNTED, NORWAY'S GOVERNING LABOR
PARTY IS HANGING ON TO A SLIM (77 SEATS TO 75) LEAD OVER
THE THREE PARTY NON-SOCIALIST OPPOSITION GROUP. MINOR PARTIES
HOLD THE REMAINING THREE SEATS AS THE FINAL BALLOT COUNT
BEGINS.

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2. THE BIG GAINERS WERE THE PARTIES AT THE CENTER OF THE
POLITICAL SPECTRUM, LABOR AND THE CONSERVATIVES. PENDING
CHANGES IN THE FINAL COUNT, THE LABOR PARTY WITH
42.9 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, HAS GAINED 15 SEATS OVER ITS 1973
SHOWING OF 62. THE RIGHT OF CENTER CONSERVATIVE PARTY, WITH
24.1 PERCENT, ADVANCES FROM 29 TO 42 SEATS. THE CHRISTIAN
PEOPLE'S PARTY (12.2 PERCENT) GAINED ONE SEAT DESPITE A

FRACTIONAL LOSS (0.3 PERCENT) IN ITS SHARE OF THE VOTE. THE CENTER PARTY WAS THE WEAK LINK IN THE NON-SOCIALIST GROUP, DROPPING FROM 11.2 PERCENT TO 8.8 PERCENT OF THE VOTE AND LOSING NINE SEATS, FROM A TOTAL OF 21 IN 1973 TO 12 TODAY.

3. THE BIG LOSERS HAVE BEEN THE SMALL PARTIES. THE LEFT SOCIALIST PARTY (SV) DROPPED FROM 11.2 PERCENT TO 4 PERCENT AND, IN THE PROCESS LOST ALL BUT ONE OF ITS 16 SEATS. THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY LOSES ALL OF ITS FOUR SEATS AS THEY DROP FROM 5 PERCENT TO 1.9 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THE NEW PEOPLES PARTY LOSES ITS ONLY STORTING SEAT AND THE LIBERAL PARTY, DESPITE A DROP FROM 3.6 PERCENT TO 3.2 PERCENT OF THE VOTE HOLDS ITS TWO PARLIAMENTARY SEATS.

4. DESPITE THE NOW-APPARENT LABOR VICTORY, THE FINAL VOTE COUNT COULD, CONCEIVABLY, SHIFT ONE SEAT FROM LABOR TO THE NON-SOCIALIST COLUMN (HENCE A 76-76 SEAT STADOFF) THUS ALLOWING THE LIBERAL PARTY TO BROKER ITS SUPPORT TO A GOVERNMENT OF EITHER SIDE ON A NON-PARTICIPATING, CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. SIMILARLY, THE SV'S ONE REMAINING SEAT COULD BECOME DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPORTANT TO THE LABOR PARTY.

5. COMMENT: THE LABOR PARTY WITH ITS SOLID SHOWING AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY WHICH MADE ITS BEST SHOWING SINCE WORLD WAR II, BETWEEN THEM POLLED TWO THIRDS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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ALL VOTES CAST AND REFLECT A LARGE INGATHERING OF THE ELECTORATE AT THE LEFT-OF-CENTER/RIGHT-OF-CENTER POINTS IN THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. WHILE IT WILL NOT BE KNOWN FOR SOME HOURS WHICH SIDE WILL ORGANIZE THE NEXT GON, BOTH ARE STRONG SUPPORTERS OF NORWAY'S CURRENT FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICIES. ACCORDINGLY, NEITHER OUTCOME PRESENTS PROBLEMS TO U.S. INTERESTS. LERNER

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